AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1-5.   (Cancelled)

6.   (Currently amended) A system for controlling a workflow, located outside a branch to which a customer makes a visit, which system is connected, via a network, to plural types of operation terminal units located in said branch and to plural types of processing devices located in said branch, said processing devices processing work according to a request from said operation terminal units, said system for controlling said workflow comprising:

a storage device which stores flow management information defining a processing flow for said work according to a request from said operation terminal units;

a terminal unit I/O (inputs/outputs) control unit which controls inputs and outputs of data to and from said operation terminal units;

plural types of device management units which are provided for respective types of processing devices which controls said processing devices; and

a flow control unit which discriminates work according to a request from each of said operation terminal units, defines a processing flow satisfying said work by referring to flow management information in said storage device, and defines said device management unit to be operated out of said plural types of device management units based on said processing flow, wherein:

said storage device stores occupancy status information of at least one of the processing devices, the occupancy status information indicating a first status in which at least one of the operation terminal units has already occupied said at least one of the processing devices or not and a second status in which, if said at least one of operation terminal units does not occupy said

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at least one of the processing devices, said at least one of the operation terminal units is able to occupy said at least one of the processing devices or not; and

said device management unit selects an unoccupied processing device by referring to said occupancy status information stored in said storage device, and controls the selected processing device.

7.   (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 6,

wherein said storage device stores information identifying a branch in which said processing devices are arranged; and

wherein said device management unit, by referring to the identification information on said branch stored in said storage device, selects [[a]] one of the processing device devices installed in the same branch as the branch that made a request to said terminal unit I/O control unit, and controls said selected one of the processing device thus selected devices.

8.   (Cancelled)

9.   (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 6,

wherein said storage device stores association information between said operation terminal units and said processing devices; and

wherein said device management unit judges whether or not [[a]] one of the processing device devices is available which is associated with one of the operation terminal [[unit]] units that made a request to said terminal unit I/O control unit, controls one of the processing device devices with which an association is established if said one of the processing device devices is

available, selects [[a]] said one of the processing device devices to be operated out of the processing devices that are not associated if said one of the processing device devices is not available, and controls said selected one of the processing device thus selected devices.

10.   (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 6, wherein said flow control unit selects a type of processing device to be operated according to said processing flow, and selects [[a]] one of the device management [[unit]] units which is adequate for the selected type of processing device to be subjected to said operation, out of said plural types of device management units, as the selected device management unit to be subjected to said operation.